

The Land Line

Traditional Communication in a High-tech World

Crested Wheatgrass

(*Agropyron cristatum*)

(*Agropyron desertorum*)

Crested and desert wheatgrass are introduced species native to the Russian and Siberian steppe. They were introduced to the United States in the early 1900's. Crested wheatgrass is more common in the northern Great Plains, while desert wheatgrass is found in the more arid intermountain region, being adapted to areas receiving 8 to 20 inches of annual precipitation. Crested wheatgrasses are most common in western North Dakota with acreage decreasing from west to east. Nordan or "standard" is actually desert wheatgrass while Fairway is crested wheatgrass. For our purposes, we will just talk about both of them together as crested wheatgrass.

Crested wheatgrass is an early cool-season, long-lived perennial bunch grass. Most people easily recognize its comb-like seed head. Crested wheatgrass tends to form wolf plants which are unpalatable to livestock and decrease stand forage potential. It is also known for excellent cold and drought tolerance and is easy to establish under harsh conditions. Stand mortality is virtually unknown as this grass goes dormant during periods of drought and "springs back to life" when moisture returns.

Crested wheatgrass became prevalent in the US and Canada during the 1930's dust bowl when it was used to seed abandoned cropland. It produces abundant forage and is used mostly for early season grazing and to a lesser extent for hay. Crested wheatgrass provides highly palatable and nutritious spring forage becoming rank at maturity, with palatability and nutritional quality declining rapidly after June, providing little summer grazing. Nutritional value declines to rates below the needs of lactating livestock by mid-June. Production and quality can be improved significantly by the application of nitrogen fertilizer or by growing it in combination with legumes. Crested wheatgrass is an excellent early season complement to native rangeland. Allowing native rangeland to be deferred until early June when native rangeland is in the proper stage for grazing and of higher nutritional value.



Crested Wheatgrass

Management of Crested Wheatgrass

Crested wheatgrass is classified as an invader on native rangeland. Extensive use as pasture and hay has increased the potential to invade native rangeland. As an invader, crested wheatgrass affects the productivity of native rangeland by competing with native range plants for moisture and space during the summer season when crested wheatgrass is not palatable. The feeding of crested wheatgrass hay on summer native rangeland pastures will increase this undesired invasion and should not be done.

Another management problem is small fields of crested wheatgrass found in larger native pastures. The differences in management and grazing preferences between crested wheatgrass and native grasses make this a very difficult management situation. Crested wheatgrass should not be seeded on small fields surrounded by native rangeland and it should not be used in seeding road ditches, pipeline or other rights-of-way, or in a native seed mix.

!!!! HOUNDSTONGUE ALERT !!!!



Well, not exactly **THAT** kind of hounds tongue, but one much worse.

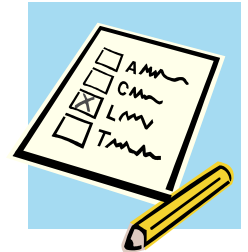
Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinals* L.) has been identified in eastern North Dakota since 1911, but has recently been observed spreading throughout western counties. It gets its name from the ob-long fuzzy leaves and is 1-4 feet tall. The flowers are red to burgundy and it blooms in late spring to early summer. It is a biennial plant that can be poisonous under the right conditions. It spreads only by seed and forms a rosette the first year, then bolts and blooms during the second year. This is a similar growth pattern to the better known Canada thistle. It has been observed on school trust land around buffaloberry thickets and creek bottoms. It tends to establish after there has been ground disturbance along roads, trails, and in rangelands where there has been overgrazing. It does not generally compete with a healthy stand of grass or similar cover. But even a well-managed pasture, where the cattle congregate around the creek or seek shade around a few thickets, can have small areas that will become infested with houndstongue. The seeds are barbed and can hitch a ride on passing animals or hikers.

Dr. Rod Lym, Professor of Plant Sciences at NDSU, reported isolated cases in 2005 of cattle and horses being poisoned by eating excessive amounts of houndstongue. Livestock will not seek out houndstongue, but will eat it, if normal vegetation is short or if the houndstongue is in the hay they are supplied.

As always, scout your pastures and field borders for new "unknowns" and have them identified. **Who knows, you might even earn a BOUNTY from the State Land Department if you report it on school trust lands!** Contact Jerry at 701-328-2800 (or e-mail jsaude@state.nd.us) about the Bounty Program or before spraying.

Vote

It might seem a little early to be thinking about November elections, but this fall there will be an important measure on the ballot that deals with management of the State's educational trust funds. It's Constitutional Measure #1, and it seeks to change the rules regarding the way distributions are determined for the Common Schools Trust Fund and other permanent trust funds under the Land Board's control. The purpose of the proposed rule change is to help us:



- ◆ Protect the state educational trust funds from inflation
- ◆ Provide stable distributions to trust fund beneficiaries
- ◆ Give the Land Board the ability to better invest the trust funds for both current and future beneficiaries

State law says we can't suggest how you should vote on this issue, but we are free to give you enough information to make an informed decision on your own. Here is essentially what a "yes" vote or a "no" vote would do. Please call Jeff at 701-328-2800 (or e-mail jengleso@state.nd.us) if you have any questions or would like more information on this measure.

A "YES" VOTE (To Update the Rules)	A "NO" VOTE (To Keep Existing Rules)
Trust assets will be managed in a more efficient manner that will allow the Land Board to maximize returns and minimize the risk of the entire portfolio.	Trust assets will continue to be managed for two distinct purposes. Some assets will be managed for income while others will be managed for growth.
The Land Board will make investment decisions that emphasize the long-term goals of maintaining the purchasing power of the trust funds and providing income stability to trust beneficiaries.	Investment decisions will continue to be made based on the need to generate income under current market conditions. Short-term decisions can conflict with the long-term interests of the trusts.
Trust distributions will be set prior to each legislative session. Distributions will always equal budgeted amounts.	Income projections will continue to be made prior to each legislative session. If actual income falls short of projections, distributions may be less than budgeted amounts.
Distributions will be based on the value of the financial assets in the trust funds and the growth of those assets over time. Using a 5-year average value to determine distributions will help stabilize trust distributions.	Distributions will continue to be based on the amount of interest and income generated by each trust fund during a fiscal year. This can lead to more volatile distributions, as fluctuating interest rates directly impact distributions.

Spring 2006 Surface Lease Auctions

(Times and locations of auctions are subject to change. Check official county papers, call 328-2800, or log on to www.land.state.nd.us to confirm dates, locations, and times prior to auction.)

Tracts that remain unleased after the completion of the Spring Auctions are available for rent throughout the summer on a first-come, first-serve basis for the established minimum bid. Send request to lease, along with payment, to PO Box 5523, Bismarck, ND 58506-5523

Adams County

Monday, March 20, 2006
10:00 am MT
Courthouse, Community Room
Hettinger, ND

Benson County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Jury Rm 3rd Floor
Devils Lake, ND

Billings County

Monday, March 20, 2006
1:00 pm MT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Medora, ND

Bowman County

Monday, March 20, 2006
10:00 am MT
Courthouse, Community Room
Hettinger, ND

Burke County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Ex-Servicemans Rm
Minot, ND

Burleigh County

Thursday, March 23, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Meeting Rm
Napoleon, ND

Dunn County

Monday, March 20, 2006
1:00 pm MT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Medora, ND

Eddy County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Jury Rm 3rd Floor
Devils Lake, ND

Emmons County

Thursday, March 23, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Meeting Rm
Napoleon, ND

Golden Valley County

Monday, March 20, 2006
1:00 pm MT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Medora, ND

Grant County

Wednesday, March 22, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Mandan, ND

Kidder County

Thursday, March 23, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Meeting Rm
Napoleon, ND

Logan County

Thursday, March 23, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Meeting Rm
Napoleon, ND

McHenry County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Ex-Servicemans Rm
Minot, ND

McIntosh County

Thursday, March 23, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Meeting Rm
Napoleon, ND

McKenzie County

Monday, March 20, 2006
1:00 pm MT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Medora, ND

McLean County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Ex-Servicemans Rm
Minot, ND

Mercer County

Wednesday, March 22, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Mandan, ND

Morton County

Wednesday, March 22, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Mandan, ND

Mountrail County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Ex-Servicemans Rm
Minot, ND

Nelson County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Jury Rm 3rd Floor
Devils Lake, ND

Ramsey County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Jury Rm 3rd Floor
Devils Lake, ND

Sargent County

Friday, March 17, 2006
Sealed bid due at State Land
Department by 5:00 pm CT

Sheridan County

Wednesday, March 22, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Community Rm
McClusky, ND

Sioux County

Wednesday, March 22, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Commissioners Rm
Mandan, ND

Slope County

Monday, March 20, 2006
10:00 am MT
Courthouse, Community Room
Hettinger, ND

Stutsman County

Thursday, March 23, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Meeting Rm
Napoleon, ND

Towner County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
3:30 pm CT
Courthouse, Jury Rm 3rd Floor
Devils Lake, ND

Ward County

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Ex-Servicemans Rm
Minot, ND

Wells County

Wednesday, March 22, 2006
11:00 am CT
Courthouse, Community Rm
McClusky, ND

SURFACE MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES TO FUND ANNUAL RANGE CAMP SCHOLARSHIP

Once again employees of the Land Department's Surface Management Division are providing funding for the child or grandchild of one of our lessees to attend Youth Range Camp. The scholarship includes tuition, room, and board at Range Camp which is held annually to educate North Dakota youth in the wise management of grasslands.

This year's camp will be held June 13-16, 2006, at Hanson's Logging Camp Ranch northwest of Amidon. Campers must be 13-18 years old, and are responsible for their own transportation to and from camp.

To apply send your name, address, and telephone number on a note saying that you are applying for the School Trust Land Scholarship to:

Kevin Sedivec
North Dakota State University
Box 5053, Hultz Hall
Fargo, ND 58105

The application deadline is not set but is generally mid-May. Check with your FHA advisor, extension agent, or Kevin Sedivec at 231-7647 (email ksedivec@ndsuxext.nodak.edu) for deadlines. The recipient will be selected randomly from those that apply.



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Photo taken on the Kenneth Miller ranch
south of Mandan in August 2005.

So does planned grazing really work?

It appears so.

Planned grazing info is
available to you
through the
ND Private Grazing
Lands Coalition

Contact

Kenneth Miller
701-663-9350 (home)
or
701-250-4518 ext 3